

NEW YORK, THE MODERN BABYLON

Mothers' Day in This Town Is Celebrated Twice a Week, but No White Carnations Are Worn—Eighth of a Series of Articles by Nixola Greeley-Smith.

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Revelations in the Domestic Relations Court Wherein Sons Refuse to Give a Cent to Keep Their Poor, Aged Maternal Parent From the Almshouse, Although Earning Fair Salaries.

Answer to the Query, "Should a Man Save His Wife or His Mother in Case of an Accident Where He Cannot Rescue Both?"—The Wife Wins Every Time, According to the Excuses Made by the Delinquents.



NIXOLA GREELEY-SMITH

Some years ago a young woman in Philadelphia made a suggestion, which was widely followed throughout the United States, that one day in the year—the second Sunday in May—be set aside for the celebration of Mothers' Day, and that every man and woman should wear a white carnation in honor of the mothers' festival.

The idea has never been very popular in Modern Babylon, which has, however, a special mothers' day of its own—two "mothers' days" a week, in fact—for the afternoons of Wednesday and Friday are set aside in the Domestic Relations Court for hearing cases brought by the Department of Charities against the children of old, broken-down women who have applied for admission to the city almshouse, or to give it its more impressive title, the New York Home for the Aged and Infirm.

The mothers are not complainants in these cases. Adrift in Babylon, repulsed by sons and daughters who refuse to harbor them or to contribute to their support, they turn as a last resource to the city almshouse. And before Babylon admits them to its grudging hospitality the Charities Department, in the interest of the taxpayer, investigates the circumstances of the applicant, and if it discovers a thriving relative in the direct line, summons him to the Domestic Relations Court and forces upon him his shirked and reluctant duty.

Sometimes these homeless mothers are too old and bed-ridden to appear in court, and only Mr. Garvey of the Department of Charities, who prosecutes the cases for the city, is present to give the presiding magistrate the department's report on the circumstances of the mother and her neglected children.

SOMETIMES THERE IS A CASE FOR THE CHILDREN.

The proceeding is not at all one-sided. If there is a case for the children, it is brought out by the court.

And there is a case for the children, sometimes. For old women with money in three or four savings banks often apply to the city for relief, and their ingenious efforts to convince the court that notwithstanding these visible evidences of prosperity they are in dire need, furnish the only comedy in what Magistrate Cornell, who hears them, terms the "saddest cases that ever come before a judge."

Two brothers stood together before Magistrate Cornell this week to explain why they did not contribute to the support of a mother who was too old and ill to appear in court. One of these men is a stationary engineer on the Jersey Central Railroad, the other a shipping clerk for an electrical firm. The engineer, in a flannel shirt and jumpers, with coal blackened face and hands, offered an extraordinary contrast to the dapper shipping clerk, clad in a carefully pressed gray suit, immaculate linen and a pearl gray tie. Physically the two brothers bore a remarkable resemblance to each other, but there the likeness ceased.

The engineer was obviously ashamed of the situation in which he found himself and seemed anxious to make amends. The shipping clerk, on the contrary, was angry, defiant, holding a pugnacious chin high in air and making short, dogged replies to the judge's questions.

"The mother in this case is too ill to appear in court," Mr. Garvey stated for the Department of Charities. "She lives with a widowed daughter, who has children of her own to look after. There are eight sons and daughters in this family. James, a son in very poor circumstances, helps his mother. The others do nothing for her. Some of the children are outside the State of New York. These two men, however, are able to pay something toward their mother's

bank officials and prove these things," Mr. Garvey interrupted.

"Very well," agreed Magistrate Cornell. "And now, Mrs. Hanlon, I understand that when you broke up house-keeping your son offered you a home and you went to live with him?"

"Yes, Your Honor, I did. But I couldn't stand it. I couldn't stand her. My son's wife," volunteered the old lady in explanation.

"Why not?"

"She wouldn't do nothing for me; wouldn't wait on me; wouldn't cook for me; wouldn't do anything."

"Why didn't you cook for yourself?"

"I had nothing to cook. One day she gave me five eggs to cook for my tea and they were all bad. Then when I told her what I thought of the eggs she came after me with a knife and fork."

"Maybe she wanted to give you something to eat," said the Magistrate smiling.

By this time everybody in court was laughing at Mrs. Hanlon's words. Yet every time while the discussion is revived as to which a man would save if both were in danger and his mother? The answer to this conundrum is furnished every mothers' day in the Domestic Relations Court.

The wife wins every time—why not? The wife contributes to the man's selfish happiness. She is at one with his strongest instinct.

A mother to be sure has borne him, sheltered his helplessness in infancy, toiled for him as a wife rarely does. But all that is in the long time past. And gratitude lives such a short time and mothers live so long.

There are few working women in Modern Babylon who do not or who have not supported a mother. There are thousands of women here who refuse the joys of marriage and maternity from a sense of duty to an aged parent whom they maintain. And nearly all of them have married brothers, most of whom give nothing to their parents' support, and who believe that "woman's place is in the home."

"God knows what I would have done without my daughters!" a weeping, tottering old mother in the courtroom told me.

ANOTHER VIEW OF THE MOTHER QUESTION.

Of course, there is the other side of the picture, and Mrs. Hanlon furnished it when I was in court.

Mrs. Hanlon, a hale, gray-haired stout old person, wore a fighting face and looked incidentally as if she had been victorious in many a fight. By all the signs and prognostications of prenatal influences, the son of this aged Valkyrie should have been a prizefighter, but instead he's a lithographer making \$3.

Mr. Garvey, stating Mrs. Hanlon's case, said that she had applied to the city for relief.

He mentioned incidentally that Mrs. Hanlon's sister, the late Mrs. Matthey, had died in the city almshouse possessing bank accounts in several savings institutions for hundreds of dollars of which Mrs. Hanlon had fallen heir.

"Sure, your Honor," said Mrs. Hanlon, "I used to go and see my sister every week and it cost me fifty cents every time. I paid back \$12.32 to bury her. I paid back \$19 I had borrowed from my friend, Mrs. Duff."

"But you had an account of \$27 in one bank and \$27 in another," interrupted Mr. Garvey.

"What are you talking about now?" said Mrs. Hanlon.

"Your Honor, we can subpoena the

bank officials and prove these things," Mr. Garvey interrupted.

"Very well," agreed Magistrate Cornell. "And now, Mrs. Hanlon, I understand that when you broke up house-keeping your son offered you a home and you went to live with him?"

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obligingly raised one hand to her bosom and whispered, "Me!"

"There was no living with her, Your Honor," Mrs. Hanlon continued. "She wouldn't do anything I told her to, so I left her on the coldest day of the worst month of the year."

"What month?" asked the Magistrate.

"Sure, Your Honor, I don't remember what month."

"Well, it sounds like March, let's say it was March, and now I'd like to hear from Mrs. Hanlon's son."

All this time the son, a sober, honest, decent-looking man had been standing just beside the witness chair which his mother occupied in evident distress at the mirth which the mother who accused him of neglect excited.

HIS MOTHER WANTED TO RUN THINGS HER WAY.

"I am perfectly willing to care for my mother," he said, "but there is no living with her. When I took her into my home I told my wife that she would try to run everything and that she must let her do it. But my wife is easy-going and she was willing to let her be the boss. Even with things that way, life was unbearable for all of us. But it's not my wife's fault, Your Honor. She's my second wife, and before I married I boarded with my mother."

"She put me out on the street five times. The last time—I don't know what for—she put me out on Year's Day with my little girl by my first wife. The child was sick. We walked the streets for hours before I found a friend who would take the little thing in. And the little girl took sick and died, and—"

The man's face broke into mottled patches of flesh, his mouth writhed, and suddenly he sobbed.

Then the simple bosom of the second wife heaved and tears streamed down her cheeks for the child of her husband by another woman.

"I don't know what my mother did to her," said the son when he could speak.

"Mrs. Hanlon, do you drink?" asked Mr. Garvey, for the Department of Charities.

And Mrs. Hanlon told how much she drank—a glass of beer now and then to keep my strength up because I'm a hard-working woman." Then the daughter-in-law told how much Mrs. Hanlon drinks—a very different story. And the son reiterated that he would care for his mother, but he could not live with her.

And an adjournment was taken to procure testimony concerning Mrs. Hanlon's bank books.

CAR RAMS AMBULANCE.

Surgeon Hurled Against Glass Vestibule and Badly Injured.

An ambulance from the German Hospital and a Third Avenue car collided at Sixty-eighth street to-day, and Dr. Frederick Dietrich was thrown from the ambulance against the glass front of the car vestibule. Then he fell to be caught between the ambulance and the car bumper.

An ambulance surgeon from Flower Hospital found that Dr. Dietrich was suffering from two bad scalp wounds and internal injuries. He was removed to his own hospital.

ARE YOU

ONE OF THE HUNDREDS THAT LEAN UPON OTHERS, OR ARE YOU SUFFICIENT UNTO YOURSELF?

It takes energy, brain-power, concentration to make a livelihood.

Vitality—and the power to keep it, must be considered.

To be a Tower of Strength, you must have staunch nerves, with brain and body working in harmony.

Scott's Emulsion

is the best nerve, brain and body-builder. It is pure, wholesome, invigorating.

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On Saturday, February the 3rd.

Advance styles in Spring models of Tailored Suits and Dresses.

Suits of Whipcord,—plain tailored cut-away coat, lined with Peau de Cygne. Tan and Gray. Sizes 14 to 16 years. 25.00

Dresses for Afternoon and Street wear in various materials and models. Sizes 14 and 16 years. 18.50

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CHILDREN GO BLIND IN SCHOOL ROOMS

Justice Hoffman Asks Better Lighted Buildings—Buys Glasses for the Poor.

Municipal Court Justice Benjamin Hoffman has appealed to the Board of Education to take steps to relieve what he considers one of the greatest menaces to the children of the East Side—the lighting of rooms in which they have to study their lessons that their eye sight becomes defective.

According to Justice Hoffman, there has been a great increase in the number of children with defective sight during the past few years. Unless something

is done, he says, a lamentable percentage of children of the poor will become almost totally blind.

"The public schools in my district," said the Justice to-day, "number among their pupils hundreds of children whose parents are too poor to buy eyeglasses, and who are rapidly going blind through studying in poorly lighted rooms at home and in almost as poorly lighted schoolrooms. Mr. Mandel, the principal of Public School No. 18, the largest in the world, with almost 6,000 pupils, has called my attention to the state of affairs and he and I are both trying to get the Board of Education to do something."

Justice Hoffman has taken steps to relieve conditions out of his own pocket. He has asked Mr. Mandel to send to him all children with poor eyesight, whose parents cannot afford glasses, and he will have them fitted at his own expense until the Board of Education or some philanthropic organization takes up the matter in a general way.

IF YOU DO NOT OWN A

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PLAYER PIANO

now, you will later on. Those who own one, have the greater enjoyment of those delightful qualities that have made it the favorite of the present day.

295 FIFTH AVENUE

Near 30th St., N. Y. City.

After Feb. 15, 425 Fifth Ave. Entrance 3B St.

I Certainly Am Getting Roasted

for telling the truth. When I said that unseasonable weather and a business depression had killed the men's clothing season, other merchants criticized me severely. But everybody knew it's the truth. As the Clearing House for Merchant Tailors' uncalled-for garments and utilizing their shops during dull seasons for the construction of Georges Model Clothes, I am forced to take such garments whether selling is brisk or slow. The depression, therefore, hit me harder than it did the Readymade stores and I'm now frightfully overstocked in all my five stores. I am out for the coin.

I Must Raise

\$600,000

I am considering nothing but the turning of my vast stocks into cash quickly, no matter what my loss. Choose here now from 7,000 Sack, Walking, Prince Albert, Dress and Tuxedo Suits, medium and heavyweight Overcoats, reduced like this:

\$15.00 Now \$9.50

And So On Up To \$55.00 Now \$29.50

Alterations FREE

A number of Suits, Overcoats, made to bring \$20 to \$25, at price

\$34.50

On all Auto, Fur and Fur-lined Coats, I can save you

50%

FUR COATS

I have decided to take a frightful loss on every Auto, Fur and Fur-lined coat in the house. I can save you over 50%. Included are many fine coats at low prices. Natural Muskrat lined coats as low as \$40, and so on, including Beaver, Other and French Seal. Good coats at \$125, up to Baby Lamb Coats at \$194.50.

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